

Montgomery County, Maryland Fire and Rescue Service



Recruitment Section

About this handout

- This handout is designed to provide information which you may find useful as you prepare for the oral interview.
- The MCFRS Recruiting Section has prepared this information, but use of these suggestions is purely optional.

The oral interview

- The oral interview is an important component of the MCFRS hiring process and provides an opportunity for you to showcase your strengths, attitude, and abilities.

Planning for your oral interview

- Do you know how to get to the interview site?
- Free parking is on site but you may need to search for a spot. Allow plenty of time for parking.
- Get there EARLY! Arrive at the interview site a minimum of 30 minutes prior to your scheduled interview appointment.

Preparing for the interview

- General interview tips and preparation guides can be found on the internet, or at your local library.
- You may want to practice answering general interview questions with a friend to gain their feedback.
- Preparation and practice may help boost your confidence.

The MCFRS interview panel

- Your interview panel will consist of three members of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service who will ask you a series of questions and evaluate your responses.
- The interview panel is concerned only with your oral interview answers. They will not review your resume, application or written test score at any time.

The oral interview

- The interview will consist of 8 questions.
- Each question will have a specific time limit for you to answer.
- A timer will be visible to you and you will monitor your own time.
- The panel members can not explain or elaborate on the questions.
- During the interview, you will have a written copy of the questions to refer to.

When answering questions...

- Do not be surprised if the panel members are not looking at you. If they are taking notes, they are focusing on what you are saying.
- Try to highlight your personal experiences or describe how you might handle a situation in the answers you give.

When answering questions...

- ANSWER THE QUESTION - don't beat around the bush. If the question is not clear, you may refer to the written interview questions which have been provided to you.
- We want YOUR answer, not what you think we want to hear.

“What If...” Questions

- Are used to determine your judgment,
- Used to see how you think,
- Used to see how you react to new situations, even if the question seems improbable.

Use “bridging” to answer questions

- Bridging is the relating of the past experiences and knowledge to the position (duties and responsibilities) you are seeking.
- Utilize: Work history, education, military, special training, hobbies, sports and team involvement to assist you in doing this.

Complete your answer by “bridging”

- Highlight your KSA's (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities) to complete your answer.
- Do you have a background that will allow you to understand things other people may not?
- For example, “As a Firefighter...” I will use the skills that I have learned while... going to school, working, serving in the military, playing sports, etc.

Examples of bridging

- Let's say you are a bus driver. How can this relate to the position of firefighter?
- You have demonstrated, in your current line of work, the following:
 - Being on time
 - Customer service
 - Responsibility
 - It is important that you can describe your experiences and relate them to this job!

Which of my KSA's matter?

- All of them! There is not any one thing that is more important than another. It is the sum of your knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's) that matter.
- Past performance is among the best predictors of future performance.

Work Experience

- I can explain to the interview panel how my previous work experience has prepared me for this position.
- I can use “bridging” to show how I have performed well in the past.

Education Experience

- I can explain to the interview panel how it has prepared me for the position of Firefighter/Rescuer.
- I can “bridge” effectively.



Group Experiences

- I have a winning, 'team player' attitude.
- I have had social and leadership experiences that will help me as a Firefighter/Rescuer.



In Conclusion...

- The oral interview is an important step in our hiring process
- Practice makes perfect!
- Come prepared.
- Know the date, time and place of your interview. Be on time.
- Nervousness is common and understood.
- Be proud of yourself! You are one step closer to accomplishing your goal!

Good luck with your interview!

- Contact the MCFRS Recruitment Section

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www.MCFRS.org/recruiting



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